

## REMARKS

### *Pending Claims*

Claims 9-25 are pending in this application, claim set 1-7 having been cancelled herein without prejudice to reassertion, and claims 18-25 having been added by way of this amendment. In short, independent claim 8 has been cancelled, and claim 18 has been added; the claims previously depending from claim 8 have been amended to depend from new claim 18. No new matter has been added by way of these amendments. Claims 13-17 are presently withdrawn from consideration as being directed to an unelected embodiment. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of these amendments and the following remarks.

### *In the Drawings*

The Office Action objected to the drawings as not showing all of the limitations of claim 8. Inasmuch as claim 8 has now been cancelled, the objection is considered moot. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the drawings show all of the limitations of added independent claim 18. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to approve the drawings filed with the application.

### *Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112*

The Office Action rejected claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Inasmuch as claims 1-7 have been cancelled herein, the rejection is considered moot.

### *Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102*

The Office Action rejected claims 1-4 and 6-12 as anticipated by U.S. Patent 4,515,842 to Kovacs (paragraph 8 of the Office Action). Kovacs discloses a blow-moulded parison which can be in the form of a boot (column 2 lines 5 to 9). Such a boot (10) is provided with "an integral nipple" (16) (column 4 lines 31 and 32). The boot (and the nipple) are formed "in a single blow-moulding operation" (column 4 line 44).

In sharp contrast, as claimed in new independent claim 8, the connector is formed separately and connected during blow-moulding, whereas in US 4515842, the connector is formed by the blow-moulding operation itself. Thus, Kovacs cannot satisfy the limitations of 18, *i.e.*, "the connector element being secured in position by a portion of the material of the parison which has entered the hollow passage of the connector element to weld and seal the material of the parison to the material of the connector element to form said opening during

the blow-moulding of the parison.” Therefore, Kovacs is directed to an entirely different arrangement and does not satisfy the elements of new claim 18. As a result, Kovacs cannot anticipate claim 18 or any claims depending therefrom.

The Office Action also rejected claims 1, 4, 5, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 913,036 to Nelson (paragraph 9 of the Office Action). Nelson discloses a pipe coupling method in which lateral pipes are connected to a main pipe using a coupler (2). The Office Action asserts that Nelson shows an arrangement in which the material of the pipe is received in a connector. It is not understood why the Office Action asserts that reference numerals 6 and 8 are a unified structure, however. Reference numeral 6 is a pipe. Reference numeral 8 is oakum, which, according to the American Heritage Dictionary, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., is “Loose hemp or jute fiber, sometimes treated with tar, creosote, or asphalt, used chiefly for caulking seams in wooden ships and packing pipe joints” that is preferably covered by cement once the pipe 6 is inserted into the thimble 3 (lines 100-106). Presumably, based upon the cross-section illustration, is not made of oakum and cement. Thus, inasmuch as 6 and 8 are not even the same structure, as asserted in the Office Action, the very premise upon which this rejection is based is faulty.

Moreover, according to new claim 18, the parison is a blow-moulded structure, and the blowing material of the parison enters the opening in the separate connector element. In contrast, in Nelson, the lateral pipe is not blown and a connection is not made during the formation of a pipe. Further, none of the elements of Nelson appear to be formed of a thermoplastic material, as likewise claimed in claim 18. Accordingly, Nelson cannot satisfy the requirements of or anticipate claim 18.

The Office Action also rejected claims 1, 4, 5, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 1,912,993 to Murray (paragraph 10 of the Office Action). Murray discloses a method of joining pipes and using a liner ring (3). Inasmuch as Murray is directed to metal welding, none of the components would appear to satisfy the limitation of a thermoplastic material, as claimed in claim 18. Further, as with Nelson, the arrangement of Murray does not satisfy the requirement of claim 8 that the parison be blow-moulded and that the connection is made by material entering the connector during blow-moulding. Consequently, Murray cannot satisfy the limitations of or anticipate claim 18 or the claims depending therefrom.

Finally, the Office Action also rejected claims 1, 4, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 390,821 to Thomas (paragraph 11 of the Office Action). Thomas discloses a method of joining a lead pipe with a cast metal plate. The lead pipe has an end dipped in tin and placed in a casting mould where a metal flange is cast directly on the end

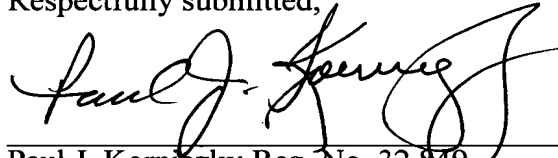
In re Appln. of Houis et al.  
Application No. 09/645,777

of the pipe. Again, there is no blow-moulding and no entry of blow-moulded material into a connector. Moreover, the cast metal flange of Thomas does not satisfy the limitation of claim 18 that the parison be a thermoplastic material, or the limitation of claim 18 that "the material of the parison [enter] the hollow passage of the connector element." Accordingly, Thomas does not satisfy the elements of independent claim 18 and cannot anticipate the same.

*Conclusion*

For the reasons identified above, none of the cited references anticipates or renders obvious the structure claimed in new claim 18 or the claims depending therefrom. The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



---

Paul J. Korniczky Reg. No. 32,849  
LEYDIG, VOIT & MAYER, LTD.  
Two Prudential Plaza, Suite 4900  
180 North Stetson Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6780  
(312) 616-5600 (telephone)  
(312) 616-5700 (facsimile)

Date: August 26, 2004

Amendment or ROA - Regular (Revised 7/29/03)